

2 SPIRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

THE CRITICAL CONDITION OF FRANCE.

Our latest cable despatches from Paris do not show that we more than two thousand miles away, exaggerated the situation in France. We had prepared the public mind of this country to regard the election in France as a test of the French estimate of Napoleonism. The facts which the elections brought out justified our strongest statements. The result of the Paris elections was so clearly, so fully, so emphatically anti-Napoleonic, that no one, no matter what his previous opinion may have been, was left room for doubt. The response made by the other large cities and generally throughout the departments was quite as decided and quite as unmistakable. Paris, the large cities generally, the intelligent sections of the departments, have all spoken with one voice, and that voice has, without any qualification, condemned the one man government.

The situation is not much altered to our view by the explanations which the Government, through the acknowledged official journals, has given to France and the world. That the Government was fully aware of what was to happen, and had taken all the necessary precautions to prevent serious results, seems to us rather confirmatory of our views than otherwise. When praise is meted out liberally to the troops for their patience, firmness, and moderation in suppressing the disturbances, it convinces us, if conviction were necessary, that anti-Napoleonic feelings were manifested, and manifested more strongly than we have been encouraged to believe. Even the Government and the Government journals cannot disguise the fact that the situation really is serious. Documents of secret societies have been seized, but only through the instrumentality of paid spies and hiring agents. This, however, is not all. The Duke de Persigny is deeply exercised by all that has happened. He has written to his friend Olivier, the one French statesman who has advocated the joint cause of Napoleonism and liberty, admitting the wisdom of Olivier's position, and going in for the empire and liberty on the ground that a just, firm government can bear the existence of every liberty. The Duke de Persigny thus admits that Napoleonism, if it would live, must change its base. From the fact that Baron Haussmann has resigned his position as Prefect of the Seine, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the Duke de Persigny foresees the future policy of the government.

Looking at all the facts of the case, and giving them a liberal interpretation, we can come to no other conclusion than that the policy which the Emperor for seventeen years has been sedulously pursuing has been endorsed by the country and admitted by the Government. It is now made abundantly manifest that the Emperor has made a mistake; that his ideas, grand as some of them have been, have not laid hold of the French mind, and that France now, in place of being driven, must be humored, flattered, yielded to, and otherwise gently led. It was evidently Napoleon's opinion that if France could only be dazzled by imperial splendor and success, France would be satisfied. No doubt he was so far correct. The Russian war, the Italian campaign, the Grand Expositions, the costly improvements of Paris, all for a time had a good effect. But wars and exhibitions are expensive, and so is the remodeling of a great city like Paris; and, unfortunately, the Emperor has lived long enough to allow the expenses incident to such undertakings to loom too prominently before the public mind. This, however, does not fully take the case. The French people not only now see the costly result of this splendid and protracted show; they have been feeling, and they are now feeling, that the success which for a time gratified their vanity has of late been totally wanting. The Mexican blunder, with its tragic results; still pains them. His interference in the affairs of Italy has been to them a doubtful benefit. His policy with regard to Prussia is on all hands admitted to have been a failure. He attempted too much and accomplished too little. After seventeen years of pretensions and rather brilliant imperialism, France discovers and, hesitates not to proclaim, that she is not what she once was, not what she thinks she ought to be; that territorially she is too straitened; that among the powers of Europe she is no longer the first, and that liberty, as it is found in France, is an inbuilt, is denied to her citizens. In other words, France has declared that twenty years of universal suffrage, coupled, as universal suffrage has been, with imperialism, has been a mockery and a sham.

The question which more than once we have asked already, is still the prominent question of the hour—What will Napoleon do? Events have proved that to pursue the policy which has become identified with his name would be fraught with serious danger. His embellishment of Paris, which has made that city at once the most beautiful city and the most magnificent fortress in the world, has not done so much for him as he expected. A rising in Paris is now at once more difficult and more easily put down. The days of barricades are gone, but Paris is not France in the old sense any longer. The sympathy between the heart and the extremities is strong, but stronger than ever. It is this strength of sympathy, in fact, which constitutes the difference. The railroads and the telegraphs have compacted the great body, and every pulse of the body beats harmoniously with the action of the heart. In olden times Paris alone felt and thought and acted, and France was willing to follow. Now all France feels and thinks equally with Paris, and is equally ready to act. Paris is no longer France, nor is France Paris. Yet Paris and France are now more a unit than ever they have been. To hold Paris now is only to hold a part of France; and bloodshed in Paris now would not fail to act as a signal for a general rising all over the country. In a conflict with the people Napoleon knows well that it is now dangerous to trust the troops too far. French soldiers have found out the value of going with the winning cause. A general rising, in consequence, in present circumstances is a thing to be avoided. To persist in his present course would be to provoke such a rising; and it may be taken for granted that such a course will not be followed. Further reforms than this become a necessity. That something will be done in this direction we have no longer any doubt. How far concession will go we must wait to see. In the present attitude of Prussia, we must still be allowed to say, there is an opportunity furnished Napoleon for giving an onward direction to French discontent. We look for reform, but as reform is only a means to an end, we shall not be surprised to learn that reform is to be backed up by a foreign war.

SOUTHERN REPUBLICANS PROMOTING CONCILIATION AND PEACE.

From the N. Y. Times.

Governor Senter is resolved that there shall be no misapprehension of the position he occupies in the Tennessee contest. He means that the battle with the Stokes section of the Republican party shall be fought out squarely, with no resort on either side to false pretenses. The main issue separating them relates to the proscription measures which are among the relics of the bitter conflict with Rebellion. And while Stokes proclaims a purpose to uphold the disabilities enacted when the passions of the conflict were at white heat, Senter with equal emphasis avows himself a convert to the magnanimous policy indicated by the Chicago Convention, and approved by General Grant in his intercourse with Virginians and Congress. There is nothing hesitating or dubious in the course pursued by the Governor upon the subject. He puts the only proper interpretation upon disfranchisement when he describes it as "a temporary necessity growing out of the needs and the situation of the time," and adopted "with no expectation that it would be long continued." He sees in it now the cause of "restlessness and discontent," and in its history an influence that "engenders animosities, discord, and strife." He ascribes the desire for its perpetuation to "a selfish partisan ambition to gain office or a selfish partisan fear of losing it"—an explanation so evidently rational and just that it applies with a happy suggestiveness to the proscriptionists of Missouri and West Virginia, as well as of Tennessee. For himself, Governor Senter declares in a policy of conciliation the proper path to peace and safety. In his judgment, he says, the time has come "when the limitations and disabilities which have found their way into our statute-books, as the result of the war, should be abolished and removed, and the privilege of the elective franchise restored and extended so as to embrace the mass of the adult population of the State." These are sound and prudent utterances, whatever the motives that prompt them, and it is satisfactory to know that the candidate who is responsible for them has the support of local Republican journals and a powerful portion of the party. His election on this basis would give to the State a contentment and prosperity never attainable by partisan harshness and intolerance; and we are not surprised to hear that in the canvass, he is sustained by an influential class whom the events of the last few years had driven into retirement.

Republicans of Mississippi, we are glad to note, are preparing to reconstruct that State on a platform identical with that raised by Senter in Tennessee. The Mississippi Executive Committee, in a call for a Republican State Convention, invite the co-operation of "all who desire the adoption of the new Constitution, with every harsh feature omitted." A platform circulating in the same connection affirms the desirableness of reconstruction on the most liberal terms compatible with Federal law, and of "the removal of all political disabilities on account of past political offenses, as soon as the State shall be reconstructed upon a republican basis." These are not the whisperings of an enemy in disguise. Their harmony with the State Republican committee's call is proof that they reflect a widespread and settled conviction. And their significance is further enhanced by close identification with the administration of General Grant and the policy of Congress, and by determined opposition to "the party and the sentiment which created the war and opposed reconstruction."

The broad ground occupied by Republicans in Tennessee and Mississippi stands out in bold contrast to the proscription policy which in Virginia has its representative in the Wells ticket. The same elements and motives that are combined in Tennessee in behalf of Stokes are at work in Virginia in support of Wells. "A selfish partisan ambition to gain office" operates in conjunction with "a selfish partisan fear of losing" office; and the two, united, make up Wells' strength. The sensible suggestions of Senter, and the generous pronouncements of the Mississippi Committee, have their Virginia expression in the Walker ticket, which aims at purging the local constitution of disfranchisement and political disabilities, and electing an Executive and Legislature deserving the respect and confidence of the State.

As the first opportunity of testing the relative strength of the movement for terminating political disabilities and the movement for perpetuating them, the Virginia campaign possesses unusual interest. The habit of outside Democrats is to represent the division as one of color, and the result as typical of the supremacy of black or white in the political affairs of the State. But we trace no evidence of a separation so defined, and the attempt to create it proceeds from no real regard for the welfare of either. It seems probable that Wells will receive comparatively few votes apart from those of the negroes, but there are many localities in which the latter promise to swell the vote for Walker. Such a result is natural and greatly to be desired. A rigid division of races at the polls would be a calamity too serious to be acquiesced in cheerfully, and the moral strength of the Walker party in no small degree depends upon its ability to secure co-operation where antagonism has been confidently predicted. This effected, one chance of the failure of the conciliatory policy alone remains; and that is the chance arising from apathy on the part of white citizens, or the disgust which some affect because clauses to which they object are not to be submitted separately at the election. The extent to which this contingency affects the position of parties will be known when the registration now in progress shall be completed. If it prove a formidable reality, it will be another instance of the power of prejudice and passion, and of the folly which impels men to throw away a substantial good because it does not quite come up to their standard of perfection.

THE AMAZONS. From the N. Y. Tribune. We take back whatever we may have indiscreetly said concerning woman's lack of the logical faculty. The ladies of the bureau seem to have a great deal more logical force than they have any use for, and last Tuesday they argued (or rather didn't argue) the female warrior question with a surpassing wealth of invincible demonstration. Mrs. President Henry B. Stanton for instance showed—

1. That there were a great number of female warriors in blouses and pantaloons in our army during the Rebellion; but, so soon as their sex was discovered, they were drummed out of the ranks without any pay. 2. That, notwithstanding the pugnacity thus exhibited, women, when they became voters, would be all for peace, and "men would no longer go out like wild beasts to tear each other's eyes out."

Does the lovely and logical President really think that "going" is a recognized military operation? We beg permission to ask, if there is to be no war any more, of what use will be the splendid military ability which it is just discovered that woman possesses? On the whole, we are not astonished to find our warlike Mrs. President arguing that the Association should "not adopt a resolution that seems to commit it to this or to that." "This and that" are sometimes rather troublesome—especially in black and white.

While our hand is in, we may as well notice a writer in *The Litchfield Enquirer*, who comes out against us to the rescue of that eminent virago, Queen Elizabeth, as follows:—"If she boxed Essex's ears, there is no doubt the puppy deserved it; and, in the matter of cutting off heads, how does she stand by the side of that royal butcher, her father?" The Virgin Queen did not cut off so many heads as her father, but she managed to execute about two hundred Catholics, as such, in the course of her reign. "Ten score," as Motley says, "too many"; and he adds—"She was as imperious and absolute by temperament as her father had ever been." Lord Brougham says of her—"An assassin in her heart, nay, in her councils and her orders; an oppressor of the most unrelenting cruelty in her conduct; a hypocritical dissembler to whom falsehood was habitual, honest frankness strange; such is the light in which she ought ever to be held up, so long as humanity and truth shall bear any value in the eyes of men."

THE BOSTON JUBILEE.

From the N. Y. World.

The Boston Peace Jubilee has at last begun; and although it is, on general principles, unfair to condemn what we have not heard, and although it is not probable that New Yorkers will hear even the six thousand anvils, more or less, and the park of artillery with which its aesthetic Boston purposes to accompany its vocal emission of "Hail Columbia," it is yet quite safe to say that the Boston Peace Jubilee is a delusion and a snare. It has not the appearance of being got up for any other human purpose than giving an excellent and cheap advertisement to certain toy-burgers of that town, and of filling the pockets of its projectors out of the pockets of Boston directly, and the pockets of the whole tradespeople of Boston incidentally. There is every prospect that, as a musical entertainment, it will issue in a disastrous failure. The men who are at the head of it are such as nobody who knows anything about the matter will for an instant pretend to be even among the eminent and instructed musicians of the country. Its nominal manager is known mainly as the leader of a "brass band" which once accompanied Butler—whose personal "brass" one would think might have dispensed him from the necessity of maintaining this brazen adjunct to New Orleans—and by its performance aggravated the horrors of war to the unfortunate inhabitants of that much-enduring city. He is to Boston the lesser analogue of the Doodworth or the Graffigna of New York. The latter two are doubtless most worthy men and business men, but if they were to propose, on behalf of the musical culture of New York, to celebrate the completion of the Pacific Railroad, or the laying of the French cable, or the World's getting a new eight-cylinder press, or any other great national event, the Philharmonic and the philanthropic of New York would doubtless concur in a demurrer to a claim so preposterous; and the aesthetic cobbler who went thus far beyond his last would be sternly snubbed, and renitted to his normal and fitter task of "furnishing music for hops, balls, and private parties," or conducting an orchestra for the first five miles of the trip of a Sound steamer. We ought to apologize to them both for supposing that they could be capable of impudence so extreme.

Yet an impudence even beyond this is within the easy reach of the person who fulfills their function for Boston; and this impudence has not encountered the slightest Bostonian snubbing. The more respectable prints and persons have devoured their disgust in silence, and the baser sort have shouted hosannas to the "enterprise," the artistic spirit, and the patriotism of this musician who applies the maxims of advertising to the practice of art. It is a priori impossible that an enormous show like this can issue in any real good to anybody. As a means of aesthetic culture, it is absurd to consider it. As a celebration of peace, it passeth all understanding. But, as a business device, it is not absurd and it is perfectly intelligible. If it were put upon the same footing that any other manager would put any other concert on, we would have no reason to complain. We could, to be sure, compare the cost of the auditor who were so unminutely as to fancy that they were listening to the best interpretation that could be had in America of the best music that ever has been written. We could lament the clap-trap which put forward strange and hideous clamors and clangors as the consummation of a divine art. But these things are so common that it would not affect us with more nausea than we have a chance of feeling almost every day. But, when the manager of such a show appeals to us in the character of a patriot and a philanthropist, we have the right and the duty to tell him that he is no such thing, but only an ordinary man of business trying to make an extraordinary amount of money by disreputable and unfounded pretensions.

As to the musical merit of the festival, it is quite safe to say that New Yorkers who stay at home on an attended Central Park Garden every night this week will hear better music better played than will any of the misguided beings who have gone to Boston. And other merit than musical the Boston Peace Jubilee has none.

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